



Traffic Services Section Michigan State Police Field Update #1

Providing Traffic Related Information and Services to Michigan Law Enforcement

Section Phone (517) 336-6171

www.michigan.gov/msp-traffic

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Introduction

This publication is the first of a series intended to provide information to the law enforcement community on current topics relating to traffic safety and traffic enforcement. Each update may address questions from the field received by the Traffic Services Section, or may contain information on equipment, legislation, training, and enforcement efforts. Additional information can be obtained at the Traffic Services Section [webpage](#), or by contacting a specific unit directly at the numbers below. If viewing an electronic version, use the links to visit the various websites or send questions by e-mail.

School Bus Hazard Light Stops

[MCL 257.1855](#) allows for the use of hazard lights instead of flashing overhead red lights under certain conditions when pupils are not required to cross the road, and traffic is able to legally flow around the bus to the left. [Additional information](#) and a [slideshow](#) explaining the circumstances under which this type of stop can be used are available on the website.

Safety Belts and Child Restraints

Based on the number of calls received by the section, there seems to be a great deal of confusion among the general public over the issue of who is required to wear safety belts, and at what age (height, weight, etc.) a child can switch to a safety belt instead of a child restraint system. This confusion has been compounded by the publication of a card entitled "Michigan's Safety Belt Law Enforcement Guide." The original undated version of the card could be interpreted to imply that exemptions existed for several types of vehicles that were not exempted, specifically trucks over 10,000 pounds and taxi cabs. These cards, intended solely for law enforcement use in making a determination to stop a vehicle based on visible non-use of a shoulder belt, have found their way into the hands of truck drivers and taxi drivers who occasionally use them when challenging tickets. The [2002 revision](#) reformatted the information, allowing for appropriate interpretation.

[MCL 257.710d](#) requires that all children under age 4 must be properly secured in an approved child restraint system. There are no height and weight restrictions in the law, but manufacturers have height and weight limitations in place for the various systems. [MCL 257.710e](#) requires that all drivers, front seat passengers, and rear passengers "4 years of age or more but less than 16 years of age" must wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt. There are limited exemptions to each of the laws. The terms "properly secured," "properly adjusted and fastened," and "approved child restraint system" mean that the restraint system or belt must be used as specified by the manufacturer, as tested to meet the Federal Motor Vehicles Safety Standards.

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Winter Enforcement Tips

Plow truck lights

The Traffic Services Section (TSS) has received numerous calls from the field inquiring about the use of flashing, oscillating, or rotating overhead lights in use by some private snow plow operators. While a private plow vehicle may be equipped with an amber light pursuant to [MCL 257.698\(5\)\(f\)](#), there is no legal authority for private plow operators to use these lights while traveling on the road. A private plow operator may use a flashing, oscillating, or rotating amber light for safety only while on private property, or when incidentally entering a street during active plowing. Violation is a 90-day/\$100 misdemeanor. Plow vehicles belonging to the Michigan Department of Transportation, a county road commission, or a municipality are allowed to use these lights while on the highway pursuant to [MCL 257.698\(5\)\(d\)](#).

Depositing snow in the street

Pursuant to [MCL 257.677a\(4\)](#), it is a 90-day/\$100 misdemeanor to "deposit, or cause to be deposited, snow, ice or slush on any [roadway](#) or [highway](#)." By definition, a highway or street is "the entire width between the boundary lines of every way publicly maintained when any part thereof is open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel" and includes the roadway, shoulders, ditch slopes, and sidewalks.

As always, common sense and good judgement should be used when taking enforcement action.

RADAR and LIDAR Information

The Traffic Services Section maintains the website for the [Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force](#) (MSMTF). There are several helpful links on the MSMTF website, including information on current RADAR/LIDAR [equipment on state contract](#), upcoming RADAR/LIDAR [instructor training](#), and RADAR/LIDAR equipment [replacement certificates](#). Additional [information](#) on instrument certification and operator qualification is also available on the TSS website.

Traffic Crash Reconstruction Unit Update

All department [Traffic Crash Reconstructionists](#) are now equipped with Crash Data Retrieval System (CDR) Kits with the ability to download information from nearly all GM vehicles from 1996 to present and many Ford vehicles from 2001 to present. Information available depends on the year and model of the vehicle. Additional [information](#) on other services provided by the unit is available on the TSS website.

The vacant position at First District has been filled. Spl/Tpr. Allan Avery has been selected as the new First District Traffic Crash Reconstructionist effective January 16, 2005, and will receive his advanced training in February and March.

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BAC DataMaster Training

Training dates for 2005 have been finalized. Details can be found on the Traffic Services Section [website](#).

PBT Grant

The [Alcohol Enforcement Unit](#) is purchasing 1,739 new Lifeloc FC-10 Preliminary Breath Test instruments to distribute to law enforcement agencies in Michigan. A letter explaining the details of the application process will be sent to the head of each law enforcement agency and Michigan State Police post in March. Applications must be returned to the Alcohol Enforcement Unit by the deadline specified in the letter in order to be considered.

Useful Websites

Michigan Compiled Laws Index <http://www.michiganlegislature.org/mileg.asp?page=chapterindex>

Michigan Legislature (current laws, pending legislation) <http://www.michiganlegislature.org/>

Michigan Judicial Institute—Traffic Benchbook <http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/traffic/traffic.htm>

Michigan Speed Measurement Task Force <http://www.michigan.gov/msmtf>

Michigan Vehicle Code <http://www.michiganlegislature.org/mileg.asp?page=getObject&objName=mcl-Act-300-of-1949&highlight>

Uniform Traffic Code for Cities, Townships, and Villages (UTC) http://www.michigan.gov/documents/UTC_50201_7.pdf

UTC Conversion (old rule numbers to new and MVC) http://www.michigan.gov/documents/UTCConversion_chart_71189_7.pdf

Field Update E-Mail List

The Traffic Services Section has received numerous requests to be notified of future Field Updates by e-mail. To be placed on a group e-mail list, please notify the [Vehicle Code Unit](#). Because this is a mass mailing, some spam filters may not allow the update to come through without adding the sender's e-mail address to an approved list.

Suggestions for future topics can also be sent to the Vehicle Code Unit.

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Tow Dollies

Tow dollies are two-wheeled towing devices used to transport vehicles by supporting one axle on the dolly, with the other axle on the road. A 1985 agreement between the Michigan State Police and the Michigan Department of State considers them as "coupling devices" rather than trailers in Michigan. The Michigan Department of State will not issue a registration plate for a tow dolly. Do not stop vehicles or issue citations for failing to display a registration plate on a tow dolly.

Gopeds and Pocket Bikes

With warmer weather approaching, motorized scooters (gopeds) and miniature motorcycles (pocket bikes) are once again becoming an issue on Michigan roads. Gopeds generally meet the definition of moped under [MCL 257.32b](#), but are not usually equipped as required for registration by the Secretary of State. Some pocket bikes also meet the definition of moped, but most exceed the limits of 2.0 hp, 50cc piston displacement, or 30 mph top speed. For electric scooters, 2.0 hp is equal to 1500 watts and the 50cc piston displacement is irrelevant, as a vehicle without a piston cannot exceed 50cc piston displacement. Those gopeds and pocket bikes that exceed any of these limits become motorcycles under [MCL 257.31](#) if they have a saddle or seat, or off-road vehicles under [MCL 324.81101\(m\)](#). Regardless of which of the above classifications are met, gopeds and pocket bikes are motor vehicles under [MCL 257.33](#) and subject to all applicable traffic laws. Unless legally registered, they are not legal for use on roads in Michigan, and are never legal for use on sidewalks. Contact the [Vehicle Code Unit](#) for additional information.

UD-10 Traffic Crash Report Information

The Criminal Justice Information Center (CJIC) Traffic Crash Unit is planning their annual UD-10 Train the Trainer sessions for 2005, and is in the process of searching for agencies willing to host this training. The criteria for hosting these training sessions are the capacity to hold 25+ people and the equipment for a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Michael Ransom, a new CJIC staff member, will be the instructor, and brings fresh ideas on making the training more informative and interesting. If interested in hosting a training session, please contact Mr. Ransom by email at ransomml@michigan.gov or phone at (517) 322-5418.

The UD-10 Instruction Manual was revised in May 2004. Please visit the [CJIC web page](#) to view or download the [manual](#). In addition, you will find other useful information including Frequently Asked Questions, [Most Common Errors](#), and a [request form](#) for access to the Traffic Crash Web Site.

CJIC Traffic Crash Report web page: <http://w3.michigan.gov/msp/0,1607,7-123--28578--,00.html>

Problems with Web Links in These Documents

For some readers using older versions of Adobe® Reader® (5.0 and earlier), some links may not work properly. While the cause is unknown, it appears that the problem can be remedied by installing a newer version of the [free](#) software. Click on the link below (or type it into your web browser) to download a newer version.

Adobe® Reader® download page: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

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Traffic Services Section Michigan State Police Field Update #5

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Abandoned Vehicles

Vehicles as Litter

Effective December 27, 2004, 2004 PA 494 amended [MCL 324.8901\(a\)](#) to include abandoned vehicles in the definition of litter. It also amended [MCL 324.8904\(4\)](#) to provide a rebuttable presumption that the last registered owner abandoned the vehicle, and [MCL 324.8905a\(4\)](#) to make abandoning a vehicle a state civil infraction with a fine of \$500 to \$2500 for a first offense, and \$1000 to \$5000 for a subsequent offense. The vehicle must be properly disposed of pursuant to [MCL 257.252g](#) before the court can order the payment of a fine.

Abandoned Vehicle Towing and Processing

Effective October 1, 2005, 2004 PA 493 and 2004 PA 495 will amend several sections of the Michigan Vehicle Code, changing the process for towing and disposing of an abandoned vehicle. Although many of the changes are administrative or shift items to different sections, significant changes relevant to law enforcement are as follows:

- [MCL 257.240](#) requires a person selling a vehicle to either accompany the purchaser to the Secretary of State branch office, or maintain a photocopy of the properly transferred title for 18 months. Violation is only a \$15 civil infraction, but subjects the violator to civil liability for towing and storage fees.
- [MCL 257.252a](#) makes it a \$50 civil infraction to abandon a vehicle. This section also removes the police agency from the process once the vehicle has been entered into LEIN as an abandoned impound, shifting most of the notification requirements to the Secretary of State.
- [MCL 257.252g](#) allows the wrecker company to conduct the public auction instead of the police agency.
- [MCL 257.252k](#) requires proper signs before towing from some private property.

When citing a person for abandoning a vehicle, either MCL 324.8901(a) or MCL 257.252a (after 10/01/05) can be used, but not both. Circumstances, local policy, and common sense should be used when deciding which section is most appropriate. Check with your prosecutor if in doubt.

Recorked Wine Bottles

Effective May 19, 2005, 2005 PA 21 amended [MCL 436.2021](#) to allow restaurants serving wine for consumption on the premises to recork a partially consumed bottle of wine, which the consumer can then take home. The recorking consists of nothing more than pushing the cork into the bottle to the point where the "top of the cork is level with the lip of the bottle." There is no additional seal or wrapper. The new section states, in part "The transportation or possession of the partially consumed bottle of wine shall be in compliance with section 624a of the Michigan vehicle code, 1949 PA 300, [MCL 257.624a](#)." The legislature has clearly indicated by this language that the recorked wine bottle is considered an open container, subject to the normal restrictions for possessing or transporting in a vehicle.

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Traffic Services Section Michigan State Police Field Update #6

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Motorcycles

Helmets

Once again, legislation has been proposed to amend the requirement of motorcycle riders to wear crash helmets. **At this time, the law has not changed.** [MCL 257.658\(4\)](#) currently requires helmets for all riders and passengers, and any moped rider less than 19 years of age. Pursuant to the administrative rule [R 28.951](#), helmets are approved for use in Michigan if the manufacturer certifies that they meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard [\(FMVSS\) 218](#). Information on motorcycle safety, including [recognizing an approved helmet](#), can be found on the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration [website](#).

Loud Exhaust

While it is difficult to determine whether a motorcycle is exceeding the decibel levels found in [MCL 257.707c\(1\)\(b\)](#) as it passes at 55 or 70 mph, there are other sections that are enforceable without a decibel meter. [MCL 257.707\(1\)](#) prohibits the operation of a motor vehicle with exhaust that is not "in good working order and in constant operation to prevent **excessive or unusual noise** and annoying smoke," if the baffles in the muffler have been removed, destroyed, or damaged, or the motorcycle is equipped with a cutout, bypass, or similar device. [MCL 257.707c\(3\)](#) also prohibits the operation if the motorcycle "is not equipped with a muffler or other noise dissipative device, or is equipped with a cutout, bypass, amplifier, or similar device." [MCL 257.707b](#) requires that a motorcycle be "equipped with an exhaust system in good working order to prevent excessive or unusual noise." Type "motorcycle exhaust" into any [search engine](#) to link to numerous sites offering instruction and tips on making motorcycles louder.

Enforcement action can also be taken under [MCL 257.707c\(2\), \(4\), \(5\), or \(6\)](#) against the person or dealership that either modifies the exhaust or sells a motorcycle with loud or modified exhaust, while [MCL 257.707d](#) also makes the person who modifies the exhaust civilly responsible if the operator receives a citation.

Press Releases and Media Information

With the advent of the summer travel season, federally funded media campaigns and special enforcement initiatives are in full swing. When presenting information to the media, be aware of the unintended consequences of the terminology used to portray the initiative. Terms like "aggressive enforcement," "zero tolerance," and "wolf pack" have the potential to portray police as overzealous, and can be detrimental to both the specific initiative and law enforcement activities in general.

Speed Enforcement in Work Zones

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has recently instituted a policy of posting all freeway construction projects with a 45 mph speed limit, regardless of whether there is lane closure or work activity in the immediate area. Enforcement efforts are most effective in increasing traffic safety and, therefore, are most appropriate when directed toward those areas where the speed limit is reduced because of lane reduction and work activity in the immediate area. Most work zone-related crashes occur due to merging in lane reduction areas, or speed differentials between vehicles prior to entering the zone.

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2005 Michigan Vehicle Code Excerpt Manual

The 2005 edition of the Michigan Vehicle Code (MVC) Excerpt Manual has recently been completed by the Traffic Services Section and has been forwarded to the Secretary of State (SOS) for publication. It is expected to be available for distribution by late August. As with previous versions, copies for Michigan State Police troopers will be distributed through the districts, while motor carrier officers will receive their copies through the Motor Carrier Division. County and municipal police agencies may purchase copies directly from SOS Purchasing and Contracts Section at (517) 373-2570 (request MVC Condensed Version), and may order standard or customized binders from the Michigan Department of Corrections, Michigan State Industries at (517) 373-4277.

For those that are not familiar, the manual is a 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" loose-leaf publication that easily fits in a briefcase or vehicle glove compartment. MVC sections are organized by subject, with tabs that roughly correspond to the headings on a ticket book cover. Sections that do not directly relate to enforcement have been omitted to reduce the size and simplify finding relevant information.

Motorcycle Headlamp Modulators

It has come to the attention of the Traffic Services Section that some motorcycle operators have been stopped and ticketed for having installed headlamp modulators. A modulator causes the headlamp to flicker at a set rate and intensity.

The tickets have been improperly written under [MCL 257.698\(5\)](#), which states "The use or possession of flashing, oscillating, or rotating lights of any color is prohibited **except as otherwise provided by law...**" Motorcycle headlamp modulators are "otherwise provided by law" under [MCL 257.698\(4\)](#), which states in part "Unless both covered and unlit, a vehicle...shall not be equipped with a lamp...unless expressly required or permitted by this chapter **or that meets the standards prescribed in 49 C.F.R. 571.108.**" Motorcycle headlamp modulators are allowed as a safety device pursuant to [49 CFR 571.108 S7.9.4](#).

Legal devices can be used on either low-beam or high-beam, but not both, and will flicker approximately 240 times per minute. Properly working devices will give the appearance of a loose connection. Devices that alternate between high-beam and low-beam are illegal.

UD-10 Traffic Crash Report Information

There is a new shortcut to the UD-10 webpage. Type www.michigan.gov/crash to be routed directly to the page. Several new UD-10 Advisories have also recently been added.

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Traffic Services Section Michigan State Police Field Update #8

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Abandoned Vehicle Law and Procedure Update Training

The Traffic Services Section will be conducting voluntary training on the changes to the abandoned vehicle laws that will become effective on October 1, 2005. Four sessions are currently scheduled, although additional sessions may be conducted if necessary. There is no cost to attend. Seating is limited. Contact [Sgt. Lance Cook](#) if you would be interested in hosting a session in Central or Northern Michigan.

Southwest Michigan

Monday, September 12, at the Van Buren Intermediate School District, 41 ½ South Paw Paw Street, Lawrence. This session will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude before noon. For information and reservations, contact [Sgt. Jim Campbell](#), MSP 5th District HQ, at (269) 657-6081.

Western Michigan

Thursday, September 15, at the MSP 6th District HQ Conference Room, 588 Three Mile Road, Grand Rapids. This session will begin at 1 p.m. and conclude before 5 p.m. For information and reservations, contact [Sgt. Ed Hancock](#), MSP 6th District HQ, at (616) 647-0807.

Southeast Michigan

Wednesday, September 21, at Flat Rock Police Department, 25500 Gibraltar Road. This session will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude before noon. For information and reservations, contact Chief Steve Tallman, Flat Rock Police Department, at (734) 782-0636.

Eastern Michigan

Wednesday, September 28, at [Delta College, Room F-10](#), 1961 Delta Road, University Center. This session will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude before noon. For information and reservations, contact [Sgt. Lance Cook](#), MSP Traffic Services, at (517) 336-6660.

Traffic Crash Investigation Training

The Traffic Crash Reconstruction Unit, in conjunction with retired MSP Lt. Bill Brandt (BenchMark Traffic Services), will be offering a two-week [At-Scene Traffic Crash Investigation](#) school October 3-14. This course is fundamentally similar to the first two weeks of crash investigation training offered by other vendors. The training is open to all police agencies, and will be held at the MSP Metro South Post, 12111 Telegraph Road, Taylor. The cost is \$500 per student. For information, contact [Sgt. Kevin Lucidi](#) at (734) 777-0767, or [Mr. Bill Brandt](#) at (517) 622-3135.

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Traffic Services Section Michigan State Police Field Update #9

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School Bus Stops and Equipment

With the school year upon us, law enforcement personnel should be aware of two items related to school busses:

- 1) A new LED Overhead Warning Light System. This system has two modes of operation, conventional and strobe. Both modes alternately flash on and off. The conventional mode is typical of an existing warning light system; while the strobe mode flashes four times within a 255-millisecond period and then stays off for 745-milliseconds, alternating from one side to the other. The visual effect is very similar to the rear deck emergency lights in a patrol vehicle. In addition to this strobe effect, the LED lights are notably brighter than conventional halogen or incandescent lights. This new system meets all applicable state and federal laws and standards for use in Michigan.
- 2) Please remember that [MCL 257.1855](#) allows for the use of hazard lights instead of flashing overhead red lights under certain conditions when pupils are not required to cross the road. See the Traffic Services Section [webpage](#) for additional information, [Frequently Asked Questions](#), and to view a [slideshow](#).

Abandoned Vehicle Update Training—Additional Dates and Locations

Due to the overwhelming response to the training announced in [Field Update #8](#), four additional sessions have been scheduled. There is no cost to attend. Seating is limited. Due to time constraints, no other sessions will be scheduled before the October 1, 2005 changes in the law take effect. Consideration of future sessions will be based on response and feedback to the classes currently scheduled.

Location Changes for Delta College and Flat Rock

Delta College—the classroom has been changed to G-160. For those familiar with Delta, this is the auditorium where the police academy graduation is normally held.

Flat Rock—the location has been changed to the Community Center, 1 Maguire Drive. The new phone number for reservations and information is (734) 782-2496 Ext. 301.

Eastern Upper Peninsula

Monday, September 19, at the Michigan State Police (MSP) St. Ignace Post, 901 Graham Avenue. This session will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude before noon. For information and reservations, contact [Sgt. Amy Pendergraff](#), MSP St. Ignace Post, at (906) 643-7582.

Central Lower Peninsula

Thursday, September 22, at the Michigan State University Department of Public Safety, 87 Red Cedar Road, East Lansing. Free parking is available in Ramp 5/Lot 45 across from the department. This session will begin at 1 p.m. and conclude before 5 p.m. For information and reservations, contact [Insp. Mary Johnson](#), Michigan State University Department of Public Safety, at (517) 355-2225.

Northwest Lower Peninsula

Friday, September 23, at the [Kalkaska Memorial Hospital, Education Center](#), 419 South Coral Street, Kalkaska. This session will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude before noon. For information and reservations, contact [Helen Chew-Artress](#), Kalkaska Police Department, at (231) 258-9081 Ext. 10.

Northeast Lower Peninsula

Monday, September 26, at the Alpena Police Department, 501 West Chisholm Street. This session will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude before noon. For information and reservations, contact [Tracy Marquardt](#), Alpena Police Department, at (989) 356-3371.

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Traffic Services Section Michigan State Police Field Update #10

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Changes to the Uniform Law Citation

Both the Uniform Law Citation and Commercial Law Citation have recently been updated effective January 1, 2006. Agencies may continue to use the current stock until depleted. Law enforcement agencies must order the new revision when ordering citations, and should contact their vendors to ensure that the correct revision (Rev. 06/05) is used. For more information please refer to our [Uniform Law Citation](#) webpage.

Commercial Vehicle Crash Reporting

The federal government requires states to report data on truck/bus crashes for data analysis and grant funding. Proper completion of the truck/bus section of the UD-10 will help ensure Michigan's compliance. Any commercial vehicle used by a business with either an actual weight or gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 10,000 pounds must be reported. Additionally, federal guidelines require that a van with a manufacturer's rated seated capacity of nine or more people must be reported as a "bus" if used by a business even though it may not otherwise qualify as a bus under Michigan law.

It is important to properly identify the motor carrier (the trucking company or business) on the UD-10. The identification on the door is not always the carrier. Check the bill of lading or the driver's log book. If unsure, ask the driver who is responsible for the load or who is paying the bills. A broker or freight forwarder is not the carrier. Contact an [MSP Motor Carrier](#) Officer if you need assistance.

UD-10 Purchasing System Information

The [Criminal Justice Information Center](#), Traffic Crash Reporting Unit (TCRU) has a new website that will allow an involved party or an insurance agent to [purchase a crash report](#). The cost is \$10.00 with \$3.00 being returned to the policing agency and the remaining funds retained for future enhancements to the Traffic Crash Reporting System. When an agency begins submission of electronic crash data, the revenue share is increased to \$5.50. A card explaining how to retrieve a report through the internet can be given to an involved party at the scene of the crash and can be obtained for free from the TCRU. Please contact Jamie Mathews at (517) 322-1150 to receive a supply of cards or direct questions to Sydney Smith at (517) 322-1188.

Railroad Grade Crossing Crash Investigation Training

Michigan Operation Lifesaver is sponsoring two sessions of the Grade Crossing Collision Investigation course in December. This course is designed to enhance the investigative skills of law enforcement officers responding to rail/highway grade crossing crashes and other railroad incidents. The first course will be held December 7-8, 2005, at the Multisports Complex in Monroe. The second course will be December 13-14, 2005, at the Macomb County Sheriff's Department. Enrollment is limited to 20 officers for each session. The course is MCOLES certified. There is no fee to attend. Contact Michigan Operation Lifesaver at (800) 759-9012 for information or fax reservations requests for officer enrollment (name/department) to (517) 318-0527. The sessions will provide a hands-on field exercise at a rail facility and a locomotive ride that includes an overview of the "Officer on the Train" enforcement program.

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Traffic Crash Investigation Training

The Traffic Crash Reconstruction Unit, in conjunction with retired MSP Lt. Bill Brandt (BenchMark Traffic Services), will be offering two traffic crash investigation courses in 2006. A two-week [At-Scene Traffic Crash Investigation](#) school will be held from June 12-23, 2006. This course is fundamentally similar to the first two weeks of crash investigation training offered by other vendors. A two-week [Technical Traffic Crash Investigation](#) school will be held from February 6-17, 2006. This course builds on the At-Scene training and will prepare the student for Traffic Crash Reconstruction training if desired.

Students registering for the Technical level course should have completed an At-Scene course or its equivalent. Both sessions are open to all police agencies and will be held at the Troy Police Department Training Center, 4850 John R. Road, Troy. The cost is \$500 per student for each class. For information, contact [Sgt. Michael Bjork](#), Troy Police Department, at (248) 524-3430 or [Mr. Bill Brandt](#) at (517) 622-3135.

LIDAR Instructor Training

The Michigan State Police will be conducting three 8-hour LIDAR Instructor training sessions at the Training Academy, 7426 North Canal Road, Lansing, on January 10, 11, or 12, 2006. Students need to attend one day only. Each session is \$30 per student, including all materials and lunch. The course is certified by the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES).

To be eligible, a candidate must be both a current RADAR and LIDAR operator, have a minimum of 24 hours of patrol experience with the LIDAR device, be an MCOLES certified police officer and have department approval to attend, and possess strong instructional and organizational skills. Each student must bring a LIDAR device [approved for use in Michigan](#). Contact [Sgt. Kevin Beasley](#) at (517) 336-6651 for information or to reserve a seat.

New Registration Plate Font

With the recent introduction of seven digit registration plates, the Michigan Department of State (MDOS) has changed the font slightly in order to make plates easier to read. The new characters are narrower, allowing for more space, and have fewer curves, making them more distinct at a distance. Effective December 19, 2005, all new plates will be manufactured with the [new font](#). Specialty plates will appear with the new font almost immediately, while standard plates will display the old font until existing inventory at the branch offices is depleted.

Abandoned Vehicle Information Update

The MDOS has recently added abandoned vehicles to their [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page. This page addresses most of the issues that have arisen as a result of the new law. The two most common concerns are:

- Some vehicles impounded pursuant to MCL 257.252d are held for evidence or forfeiture. Enter these vehicles into LEIN as impounded rather than abandoned.
- If a TR-52 is not received, the police agency address may not match the ORI. Confirm the address by checking the VIN on the [abandoned vehicle website](#). A [duplicate TR-52](#) can be obtained, or an old-stock paper TR-52 can be used. Contact [Vicky Sandborn](#) at (517) 336-6167 to provide an updated ORI address.

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Standardized Field Sobriety Testing Instructor Training

The four-day [Standardized Field Sobriety Testing](#) (SFST) Instructor Course will be held February 6-9, 2006, at the Clarion Hotel in Lansing. The course is free, and meals, materials, and lodging are provided. This course is approved by the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) (NHTSA). Candidates must be current SFST practitioners and must submit a brief resume indicating why they are interesting in becoming instructors and citing the dates, location, and instructor providing their original SFST training. Contact Mr. [Robert L. Betzing](#), SFST Coordinator, at (517) 336-6436 for information.

Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices

The [Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) (MMUTCD) has been recently updated to reflect changes in the [Federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) (FMUTCD). The new version replaces the 1994 Edition. The MMUTCD can be downloaded at no cost directly from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) website by clicking on the link above or can be ordered through [The Local Technical Assistance Program](#) (LTAP) at Michigan Technological University. The cost for a copy through the LTAP is \$135, and includes a CD in addition to the manual. Questions about the MMUTCD can be directed to Mr. [Mark Bott](#), MDOT at (517) 335-2625 or [Sgt. Lance Cook](#) at (517) 336-6660.

Power Loss at a Signalized Intersection (Dark Signal)

The Traffic Services Section has recently received a number of phone calls regarding the right-of-way at intersections where a traffic signal has lost power. When a signal loses power, the intersection becomes uncontrolled and reverts back to the basic right-of-way requirements found in [MCL 257.649](#)(1) and (2). It does **not** become a four-way stop, as is frequently stated by members of the media.

There are a number of factors that are taken into account when determining the appropriate course of action in response to the loss of power at a signalized intersection. The Michigan Department of Transportation has issued a [memorandum](#) for response to power outages involving traffic signals on state trunkline highways, which accounts for a variety of factors that can influence if, when, and how temporary traffic control devices may be posted. While the memorandum is not binding on county road commissions or municipal road authorities, many have adopted a similar position. Check with your local road authority for their policy prior to the occurrence of an event.

The Michigan Department of State Police has adopted Official Order 49, [Enclosure \(9\)](#), to provide guidance to department members when responding to the loss of power at an intersection. Contact the [Vehicle Code Unit](#) for additional information.

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Motorcycle Helmet Use Codes on UD-10 Crash Report

Some confusion seems to exist about the proper coding for motorcycle helmet use in the restraint section on the [UD-10 Traffic Crash report](#). While conducting a recent study on helmet use, the Traffic Services Section (TSS) discovered that approximately one out of every four fatal motorcycle crashes from 2005 had the helmet use coded incorrectly. The most common incorrect coding was 01—No belts available. **There are three proper codes for helmet use: 10—Helmet worn, 11—Helmet not worn, and 12—Helmet use unknown.** The code 12—Helmet use unknown should rarely be used, as the investigation and/or autopsy should usually reveal whether the helmet was used. In the case of the use of a novelty helmet or other unapproved helmet, code the use as 10—Helmet worn and make a note in the remarks section that the helmet is unapproved.

Abandoned Vehicles Registered in Other States

When entering an abandoned vehicle that is titled and/or registered in another state, please be advised that the Michigan Department of State (SOS) will not send a TR-52 Notice of Abandoned Vehicle to the out-of-state owner or secured party. Their representative advises that SOS does not have access to other states' registration information through their computer system, and that they have fulfilled their legal requirement by sending the TR-52 to the police agency. They suggest that the police agency can mail a paper TR-52 to the out-of-state parties as a "courtesy." The VIN should still show up on the [SOS auto lost and found website](#) with the associated police and custodian information. This becomes a bigger issue when there is a lien holder that is not notified and does not have the opportunity to redeem the vehicle prior to auction. This is one of many issues that should be addressed through clean-up legislation, which has yet to be introduced.

Work Zone Speed Limits

With the upcoming 2006 construction season, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is abandoning the 2005 policy of setting all work zone speed limits at 45 mph and adopting an approach to setting work zone speed limits that is more consistent with standard and accepted engineering practices. Additionally, new signs will be posted directing drivers to slow down where workers are present. To most appropriately enforce a "where workers are present" speed limit, the TSS recommends that patrol vehicles set up LIDAR activities slightly downstream from an area with workers present and aim the device to **measure vehicles while they are directly adjacent to the area with workers in close proximity to traffic**.

Because compliance with MDOT standards is not universal among construction and maintenance contractors, common sense and discretion should be used when determining whether a particular work zone has workers "present" for the purpose of speed limit enforcement. Workers should be in close proximity to the travel lane with only channelizing devices (cones or barrels) rather than concrete barriers or guardrails separating the workers from passing vehicles. Once a vehicle has passed the last worker in close proximity to the passing vehicles, the driver can resume the regular speed limit for the work zone.

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Railroad Incident Enforcement Guide

Railroad incidents can be some of the more intensive and complicated situations that law enforcement officers encounter. Incidents can include crashes, derailments, hazardous materials spills, terrorist threats or attacks, or simply trespassing. Several organizations have combined efforts with state and local law enforcement agencies and compiled a resource designed to assist officers who respond to railroad incidents, the 2005 edition of the [Michigan's Model Enforcement Guide](#). Michigan Operation Lifesaver is providing a copy of this guide to each road patrol officer in Michigan. The guide can also be accessed online through the Traffic Services Section (TSS) [website](#) and may be reprinted for official use by any first responder agency or organization.

BAC Datamaster Procedures

When administering subject breath tests subsequent to an arrest, be careful to follow the procedures as set forth in the [Michigan Breath Test Operator Training Manual](#). Failure to follow the proper procedures could result in the court refusing to allow the test results as admissible evidence. Areas of concern include observing the subject for the full 15 minute observation period, using a new mouthpiece for each test, and starting a new 15 minute observation period if an additional test is needed due to "invalid sample" or "interference detected" messages.

Work Zone Traffic Enforcement Follow-Up

The Traffic Services Section has received a number of calls from both law enforcement and members of the driving public requesting clarification on the speed limit "45 Where Workers Present" sign for purposes of enforcement in a work zone. Generally, if a police officer is not sure that enforcement action is appropriate for a given situation, a citation should not be issued. Conversely, if a motorist is not sure if the speed limit applies, the driver should assume that it does apply and slow down accordingly in the presence of workers.

The sign's presence does not automatically indicate its applicability. Police officers should identify an area within a work zone where workers are in close physical proximity to passing vehicles and position themselves downstream from that area to measure vehicle speeds as they pass adjacent workers. That alone is the point at which the speed limit is appropriate, necessary for the safety of the workers and other motorists, and most closely matches the behavior of normal, prudent drivers.

It is important to remember that the "45 Where Workers Present" speed limit is not appropriate or enforceable where workers are protected by guardrail or barrier wall. If the only workers in a work zone are protected in that fashion, the applicable speed limit is the speed limit posted for areas other than "Where Workers (are) Present."

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Tinted Window Enforcement and Medical Exception

[MCL 257.709\(3\)\(e\)](#) provides an exception to the prohibition against tinted windows for “a person who is light sensitive or photosensitive, if the owner or operator of a motor vehicle has in possession a letter signed by a physician or optometrist, indicating that the special window treatment or application is a **medical necessity**.” Although there are a few genuine medical conditions, like skin cancer, that could potentially offer a legitimate use of the medical necessity exception, in many cases the doctor’s letter is either obtained under false pretense, overstates a minor eye problem that is better treated with sunglasses, or amounts to a “permission slip” rather than a prescription.

Because tinted windows can be detrimental to traffic safety by reducing a driver’s visibility outward, and to officer safety by reducing visibility inward, reducing the number of vehicles with tinted windows by eliminating marginal or improper doctor’s letters is a legitimate goal. The Traffic Services Section has been made aware of several creative ideas used in this regard including obtaining a subpoena for the doctor to testify to the medical necessity and submitting a Request for Reexamination (OC-88) form to the Secretary of State.

International Driving Permit

It appears that the fraudulent “International Driver License” (IDL) is again becoming an issue in Michigan. The Vehicle Code Unit was recently contacted regarding the use of such a fraudulent document by a Michigan Militia member during a traffic stop. The driver produced a document that appeared to be a legitimate document issued by the government of the [Turks and Caicos](#) Islands. The IDL does not exist, per se, but is often confused with the legitimate International Driving Permit (IDP).

Under the Geneva Convention on Road Traffic (1949), the IDP is a supplementary document that provides a translation of a current valid operator’s license into several languages (usually nine). It is not valid by itself, and must be used in conjunction with a valid license. It is not valid in the country where issued and is only valid for one year. Its sole purpose is to facilitate the contact between a police officer and a motorist who speak different languages. The permit is not required to operate a vehicle in most of the treaty countries, but Article 24 (2) advises that “A Contracting State **may** however require that any driver admitted to its territory shall carry an international driving permit conforming to the model contained in Annex 10...” An IDP is not required for foreign drivers in Michigan.

There are numerous companies advertising on the Internet, attempting to sell documents as if they were legitimate international licenses. Most of the advertisements are just confusing enough to entice customers into thinking they are obtaining a valid document, making reference to or using language from the Convention. The ads generally state that such “license” can’t be revoked or assessed points, which is technically true but misleading as it is not a license at all. The target audience of these ads appears to be those persons looking to hide their identity or confuse police officers. **A citizen of the United States operating a motor vehicle in the United States would be required to have a license from his home state and should not be presenting an IDP to a police officer. A police officer that is presented only an IDP or IDL on a traffic stop should request identification documents, especially a valid license and passport, to verify the subject’s identity and ability to drive.** Particular attention should be given to documents alleged to have been issued by nations in the Caribbean.

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UD-10 Traffic Crash Report Update Training for 2006

The Criminal Justice Information Center (CJIC) has announced their 2006 UD-10 update [training calendar](#). For information or reservations, please contact Michael Ransom at RansomML@michigan.gov or (517) 322-5418, Amanda Heinze at HeinzeA@michigan.gov or (517) 636-0192, or Angela Stanton at StantonA@michigan.gov or (517) 636-6034. Email is preferred.

Urban Legends of Michigan Traffic Law

The Traffic Services Section frequently receives questions based on misconceptions or urban legends. Some of these questions may involve valid laws or procedures in other states or provinces, but many fall into the category of myth or urban legend. A few of the more frequently asked questions appear below.

Riding in a Trailer: There is nothing in the Michigan Vehicle Code that specifically prohibits riding in a trailer, regardless of the type of hitch or configuration. Two-way communication between driver and occupants is not required. Child restraint violations might apply, but this is questionable as both MCL 257.710d and 257.710e refer to riding in a motor vehicle. Careless or reckless driving may apply in extreme circumstances if a police officer observes a particular action that substantiates such a charge.

Barefoot Driving: There is nothing in the Michigan Vehicle Code that prohibits barefoot driving. Careless or reckless driving would really be a stretch, as an argument could be made that a barefoot person has more control over the pedals.

Driving with Headphones: There is nothing in the Michigan Vehicle Code that specifically prohibits driving with headphones or earbuds. A driver could, however, be cited for careless, reckless, or failure to yield to an emergency vehicle if a police officer could show that the headphones interfered with the driver's ability to safely operate the vehicle. Some other states do have prohibitions against headphone use.

Suicide Knobs: There is nothing in the Michigan Vehicle Code that specifically prohibits "suicide knobs" or "spinners" on steering wheels. Such knobs could actually be required pursuant to a restricted operator's license for a person with a disability.

***677, *67, #77, etc.:** This [internet myth](#) is actually based partially in reality, but does not apply to Michigan. In Michigan, as well as most states, the number to contact for an emergency is 911. Some states have a non-emergency number as well, with *677 being the variant that works in [Ontario](#) (677=OPP on the telephone keypad).

Alcohol in Recreational Vehicle: [MCL 257.624a](#) prohibits possessing or transporting an open container of alcoholic beverage in a vehicle. A motor home, camper, van, etc. that is a single unit is a motor vehicle and falls under this prohibition. Because trailers are also vehicles, passengers in a trailer are similarly prohibited from possessing open intoxicants. Alcoholic beverages are required to be stored in an inaccessible area if there is no trunk available. There is an exception in subsection (4) for a chartered vehicle (limousine) authorized to operate by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

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Stationary Emergency Vehicles

The Traffic Services Section has received a number of calls from drivers who have been cited for a violation of the "move over" law expressing concern that the law was misinterpreted or misapplied. [MCL 257.653a](#) requires a driver, when approaching a stationary emergency vehicle with overhead lights activated, to move over into an adjacent lane, if available. On roads with only one lane in each direction, or **when it is not possible to move over** into an adjacent lane due to traffic, weather, or road conditions, the driver is required to **"reduce and maintain a safe speed...and proceed with due care and caution"**, or as directed by a police officer." Whether it is possible to move over, or what is considered a safe speed for the conditions, is a judgement call based on the specific circumstances at the scene.

UD-10 Truck/Bus Section Training

The Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division and the United States Department of Transportation are offering two one-day training sessions on the proper completion of the Truck/Bus Section of the UD-10 traffic crash report. Topics include vehicle configurations, when a Commercial Driver License (CDL) and medical card are needed, and proper identification of the carrier.

Both sessions will be held at the Michigan State Police Training Academy on July 10 **or** July 11, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is no cost to attend this training. Lunch and breaks are included. Please contact Ms. Josefina Romero at (517) 336-6489 or by e-mail at romeroJ@michigan.gov to reserve a seat in either session.

In Case of Emergency (ICE) Contact Information on Cell Phones

Many cellular telephone companies and [safety advocacy groups](#) are recommending that cellular telephone users enter an emergency contact name and telephone number under the heading of ICE or I.C.E. in their cell phone address book. While there is no state or national database for such contacts, first responders otherwise unable to locate a contact for an unconscious or deceased victim should consider checking the victim's cell phone for such a contact.

Please be aware that there are a number of [urban legends](#) associated with the use of ICE numbers and cell phones relating to spreading viruses or draining account balances, none of which are true.

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Historic Vehicle Registration Plates

[MCL 257.20a](#) defines "historic vehicle" as a vehicle that is over 25 years old and used "**solely as a collector's item** and for participation in club activities, exhibitions, tours, parades, and similar uses...but is **not used for general transportation.**" [MCL 257.803a](#) and [MCL 257.803p](#) provide for two types of historic vehicle registration plates. If a vehicle is over 25 years old, but is used for general transportation, then it does not qualify as a historic vehicle. Violations of 803a and 803p are 90 day/\$100 misdemeanors, and the plates are subject to cancellation by the Secretary of State (SOS).

Dealer Registration Plates

[MCL 257.244\(3\)](#) allows a dealer to use a dealer plate on a vehicle "otherwise required to be registered under this act" to operate or move the vehicle without registering the vehicle to the dealership. This exemption also includes "an employee, servant, or agent of the dealer." Subsection (5) states "A licensee **shall not use** a special plate described in this section **on service cars or wreckers** operated as an adjunct of a licensee's business." [Attorney General Opinion 6634](#) states that a dealer plate is permissible on a vehicle used to transport vehicles to auctions or other dealers, if such vehicles could have legally been driven with a dealer plate. Subsection (8) allows a lessee or purchaser to operate a vehicle with a dealer plate for up to 72 hours after the time of lease or purchase with appropriate paperwork.

While the language is relatively permissive in how these plates can be used, there are some restrictions. Family members of employees are generally not covered by the exemption. Vehicles owned by and titled to an employee are also not covered. When investigating possible dealer plate misuse by an employee of a dealership, check the VIN to determine the actual titled owner.

Special Mobile Equipment

[MCL 257.62](#) defines special mobile equipment as "every vehicle **not designed or used primarily** for the transportation of persons or property and **incidentally operated or moved over the highways**, including farm tractors, road construction or maintenance machinery, mobile office trailers, mobile tool shed trailers, mobile trailer units used for housing stationary construction equipment, ditch-digging apparatus, and well-boring and well-servicing apparatus. The foregoing enumeration shall be considered partial and shall not operate to exclude other vehicles which are within the general terms of this definition." [MCL 257.216](#) exempts special mobile equipment from the requirement to display a registration plate, but a special plate may be purchased through SOS.

For a trailer to qualify as a mobile tool shed, it must be towed to the worksite empty, disconnected from the towing vehicle, placed on supports, and left at the site for an extended period of time. A trailer used to haul plumbing, roofing, electrical, landscape, painting, or other similar supplies, and removed from the worksite frequently is not a mobile tool shed trailer.

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Changes to the Speed Limit Laws

Effective November 9, 2006, several sections of the [Michigan Vehicle Code](#) related to [speed limits](#) are changing. Many of these changes are designed to increase traffic safety by reducing the number of artificially low speed limits, especially within municipalities, and to increase driver confidence that speed limit signs accurately reflect the actual conditions faced by drivers. Artificially low speed limits are often set for political reasons due to misunderstanding of traffic engineering principles. They tend to increase passing maneuvers and tailgating, cause contempt among motorists for legitimate traffic controls and law enforcement, and are often responsible for the phenomenon known as "road rage." Links to the amended versions of the specific sections listed below have not been included, as they will change after the laws take effect. Both the old and new language is available at www.legislature.mi.gov.

Truck Speeds

The speed limit for most trucks on freeways where the speed limit for other vehicles is 70 mph will be increased from 55 mph to 60 mph. Highways with speed limits between 55 mph and 65 mph (inclusive) will remain at 55 mph for trucks (MCL 257.627(6)).

School Bus Speeds

The speed limit for school buses will be increased from 50 mph to 55 mph on highways with a speed limit between 55 mph and 65 mph (inclusive), and 60 mph on freeways with a speed limit of 70 mph (MCL 257.627(6) and (7)).

Minimum Freeway Speed

The minimum speed on all freeways will be increased from 45 mph to 55 mph, except as necessary for conditions, or pursuant to a permit issued by the road authority (MCL 257.628(8)).

Business District

The definition of "business district" (MCL 257.5) will be amended to more clearly and accurately define those areas where the 25 mph **prima facie** business district speed limit is appropriate (MCL 257.627(2)(a)). **Please note** that some municipalities have labeled certain sections of town as their business districts. These designated areas may or may not meet the definition of business district for purposes of traffic enforcement.

Residence District

The definition of "residence district" (MCL 257.51) will be repealed. For urban and suburban residential areas with moderate to high population densities, there will be a formula for **prima facie** speed limits (MCL 257.627(2)(d) through (f)) based on the number of driveways and intersecting streets. If not posted, these areas are 55 mph (MCL 257.627(10)). Public streets **within** platted subdivisions and condominium complexes will be **prima facie** 25 mph (MCL 257.627(2)(c)), and do not have to be posted.

Traffic Control Orders

Speed limits higher than 25 mph and lower than 55 mph (or 70 mph freeway) require a Traffic Control Order (TCO) based on a traffic engineering study. A TCO must be filed with the county clerk for absolute speed limits on county roads or state trunkline highways (MCL 257.628(6)), or municipal clerk for **modified prima facie** speed limits on city or village streets ([R 28.1153](#)), in order to be valid.

Note on Prima Facie Speed Limits

All prima facie speed limits, including **all** municipal speed limits, are **presumed** valid based on expected worst-case conditions, i.e. heavy vehicle and pedestrian traffic. If these conditions are not present at the time of the offense, a driver receiving a citation may **rebut this presumption through an affirmative defense and successfully argue that enforcement was not appropriate**. This shifts the burden of proof back to the police officer.

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Work Zone Traffic Enforcement Video

The Traffic Services Section, in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Transportation, has produced a video to answer some of the more common questions about the "45 Where Workers Present" speed limit in work zones. The video shows recommended patrol vehicle location and positioning, as well as discussing unwarranted and improper signing by some road construction contractors. The low-resolution video is currently available as a link from the Traffic Services Section [webpage](#) under the heading of "Headlines." The high-resolution video will be available as a link in the near future for those with high-speed internet connections. A limited number of DVDs are available for those unable to view the video online. Contact [Debra Schrauben](#) at (517) 336-6171 to obtain a copy.

Field Update Listserv

Due to the large number of subscribers, the Field Update e-mail list has been converted to a listserv. This should eliminate most of the problems related to spam filters and firewalls. New subscribers can join the list by: (1) sending an e-mail to LISTSERV@LISTSERV.MICHIGAN.GOV with only the words "SUBSCRIBE MSP_TRAFFIC" without quotes in the body of the e-mail, (2) joining at the [website](#), or (3) sending an e-mail to cooklr@michigan.gov with name and e-mail address.

2006 Michigan Vehicle Code Excerpt Manual

The 2006 edition of the Michigan Vehicle Code (MVC) Excerpt Manual has recently been completed by the Traffic Services Section and has been forwarded to the Secretary of State (SOS) for publication. It is expected to be available for distribution by late September. As with previous versions, copies for Michigan State Police troopers will be distributed through the districts, while motor carrier officers will receive their copies through the Motor Carrier Division. County and municipal police agencies may purchase copies directly from SOS Purchasing and Contracts Section at (517) 373-2570 (request MVC Condensed Version), and may order standard or customized binders from the Michigan Department of Corrections, Michigan State Industries at (517) 373-4277.

The manual is a 5 ½" x 8 ½" loose-leaf publication that easily fits in a briefcase or vehicle glove compartment. MVC sections are organized by subject, with tabs that roughly correspond to the headings on a ticket book cover. Sections that do not directly relate to enforcement have been omitted to reduce the size and simplify finding relevant information.

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Non-Traditional and Alternative Vehicles

The rising cost of gasoline has created a proliferation of non-traditional vehicles being used for transportation. Some of these vehicles are street legal as manufactured, some can be modified and registered, and some are not street legal under any circumstances. They fall into three broad categories:

Electric Bicycles and Other Non-Traditional Mopeds

Mopeds are defined by [MCL 257.32b](#) as two- or three-wheeled vehicles with a motor (gasoline or electric) that does not exceed 50 cc (not applicable to electric motors), produces 2.0 brake horsepower (1500 watts) or less, is not capable of traveling faster than 30 mph on a level surface, and does not **require** the operator to shift gears. The law does not prohibit gear shifting mechanisms. Any vehicle with two or three wheels that exceeds these criteria becomes a [motorcycle](#) if equipped with a saddle or seat, or an [off-road vehicle](#) if not so equipped. Any vehicle that meets the definition can be registered with the Secretary of State (SOS) and legally operated on a street if it possesses all of the required equipment and if a [TR-54](#) form is completed by a police officer.

Golf Carts and Low-Speed Vehicles

A [low speed vehicle](#) is defined by [MCL 257.25b](#) as an electrically powered vehicle designed to be operated at a speed less than 35 mph with a capacity of no more than four occupants. They are limited to certain types of roads pursuant to [MCL 257.660](#). Some electric golf carts can be **extensively modified** and registered as low-speed vehicles, subject to the completion of a [TR-54](#) form by a police officer. Golf carts that don't possess the required equipment or are gasoline powered are [off-road vehicles](#) and **cannot be legally operated on any road**.

Off-Road Vehicles

There are several off-road vehicles that can be made street legal through **extreme** modification, including traditional dune buggies, the John Deere [Gator](#), Kawasaki [Mule](#), and Polaris [Ranger](#). If so modified, and a [TR-54](#) completed, these vehicles will be titled and registered as "assembled" vehicles rather than as the original brand name.

Registration, Insurance, and Licensing

Mopeds are exempt from the insurance requirement pursuant to MCL [257.801e\(1\)](#), but are required to be registered by SOS. Operators must possess a valid Operator, Chauffeur, or Moped License. Low-speed vehicles and modified off-road vehicles are required to be registered by SOS and insured. Operators must possess a valid Operator or Chauffeur License.

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